DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 326 763 CG 022 971

AUTHOR Harley, David A.
TITLE Impaired Job Performance and Critical Incidents: Factors Influencing Supervisory EAP Referrals.
SPONS AGENCY Employee Assistance Professionals Association.; Owens-Illinois, Inc., Toledo, OH.
PUB DATE Aug 90
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (98th, Boston, MA, August 10-14, 1990).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Employee Assistance Programs; *Employer Employee Relationship; *Employment Problems; *Job Performance; Motivation; Personnel Management; *Referral; *Supervisors

ABSTRACT

Relatively little empirical research has been done on the supervisory referral of employees to employee assistance programs (EAPs). Inclusion of constructive confrontation (supervisory referral) into program standards and its continued promotion as a "central strategy" of program theory and operation calls for critical investigation of supervisors' referral behavior, factors affecting their use of the strategy, and its effectiveness with the referred employees. This study examined two factors found to influence referral action--job performance and occurrence of a critical incident at the worksite which can serve as a "trigger event" for the supervisor. Supervisors (N=415) at 25 sites from 7 organizations responded to a survey regarding their referral behavior. Both impaired job performance and critical incidents were found to have significant relationships to the EAP referral handling of a specific "job problems" employee. Reported occurrence of a dramatic worksite incident accounted for about eight times as much of the observed referral index variance as did the job performance (impairment) scale. A nonsignificant trend was noted that the more "public" the incident, the greater the referral action taken. About one-half of the respondent supervisors were found to have taken no referral action whatever with their "job problems" subordinate. These findings raise questions about supervisors' perceptions of EAPs and their motivations in referral. More research into referral dynamics is needed if EAPs are to achieve their potential to help workers and their host organizations. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED326763

Impaired Job Performance and Critical Incidents:

Factors Influencing Supervisory EAP Referrals

David A. Harley

Ingham Counseling Center
Community Mental Health Board C-E-I
5303 South Cedar Street
Lansing, MI 48911

Running Head: Supervisory Referral

CG022971

A paper presented as part of a Symposium entitled "Counseling Psychology and Employee Assistance Programs: Empirical and Clinical Contributions," (L.H. Gerstein & G.A. Bayer, Co-Chairs) at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston, Massachusetts, August, 1990. This research was supported, in part, by grants from the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) and Owens-Illinois, Inc.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

David A. Harley

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Abstract

Relatively little empirical research has been done on the supervisory referral of employees to employee assistance programs (EAPs). Inclusion of constructive confrontation (supervisory referral) into program standards and its continued promotion as a "central strategy" of program theory and operation calls for critical investigation of supervisors' referral behavior, factors affecting their use of the strategy, and its effectiveness with the referred employees. This study examined two factors found to influence referral action--job performance and occurence of a critical incident at the worksite which can serve as a "trigger event" for the supervisor.

Supervisors (N = 415) at 25 sites from seven organizations responded to a survey regarding their referral behavior. Both impaired job performance and critical incidents were found to have significant relationship to the EAP referral handling of a specific "job problems" employee. Reported occurence of a dramatic worksite incident accounted for about eight times as much of the observed referral index variance as did the job performance (impairment) scale. A nonsignificant trend was noted that the more "public" the incident, the greater the referral action taken. About half of the respondent supervisors were found to have taken no referral action whatever with their "job problems" subordinate. These findings raise questions about supervisors' perceptions of EAPs and their motivations in referral. More research into referral dynamics is needed if EAPs are to achieve their potential to help workers and their host organizations.

Impaired Job Performance and Critical Incidents:
Factors Influencing Supervisory EAP Referrals

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are a relatively recent service innovation. They have evolved over the past forty or so years from a few early attempts to deal with alcoholics to their current status and growing popularity with organizations. Evidence is beginning to accumulate that EAPs achieve actual cost-savings for their host organizations while assisting troubled employees directly or by linking them with needed helping resources.

The motivation of companies to emplace EAPs is not entirely benevolent. At least partly, an EAP is intended to function as a complementary, parallel process to the larger labor relations process of progressive discipline and the grievance procedure as a means of dealing with substandard job performance and employee misconduct. The EAP provides the company and the impaired employee a constructive, rehabilitative alternative to punishment and job termination. Much of the incentive for companies to have an EAP is to avoid turnover costs when a formerly valued employee cannot be restored to acceptable levels of perfomance. Those costs include the loss of training costs, possibly considerable, for the lost employee which must now be invested in a new employee. But those possible savings must be balanced against other costs such as accidents and increased benefits utilization by an employee who is not performing at good levels of efficiency.

Use of the term "EAP" implies a singular conception of program content and uniformity of operation, but the activites of "programs" are not nearly standardized. Adaptation and incorporation of elements of the "ideal EAP" (Shain & Groeneveld, 1980) in a particular setting and with a particular workforce defies precise description beyond a general enumeration of the elements claimed to be present and their intended relative emphasis. The state of program evaluation in

the EAP field is such that the various program "elements" or components are essentially unvalidated in their effectiveness, and little is known about their systemic interaction. As Trice (1980) and Roman (1983) observed, the employee assistance field has developed and spread largely without a solid empirical base or strong theoretical formulations. It has been an evolving field of practice, and charismatic, highly visible "authorities" have disseminated accumulated "wisdom" and made prescriptive "theory" about program operation.

From the inception, the legitamizing basis for an EAP which is management- or corporate-sponsored could be found in the correlation between the onset or worsening status of a personal problem (especially alcohol/drug abuse) and impaired job performance (Trice & Beyer, 1982). Loss of productivity provides both the means and rationale for a management-initiated intervention into the employee's personal life, resulting in a more-or-less involuntary, coerced involvement with the EAP. The supervisory referral is often called a "constructive confrontation," implying that it is a benevolent strategy of motivation involving forceful interaction between supervisor and impaired employee. An historical overview of the strategy's development has been provided by Bayer (1987), Harley (1990), Riediger (1979), Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1990), and Trice and Beyer (1982, 1984).

Constructive confrontation is deceptively simple. In "theory," little is required of the supervisor for its effective use. Evidence is accumulating that supervisory referral can lead to gains for employee and employer (Employee Assistance Professionals Association, 1989; Hall, 1989/1990; Heyman, 1976; Lett, 1988/1989; Mastrich, 1985; Tomasek, 1989/1990; Trice & Beyer, 1984). Findings on other lines indicate that supervisors' decision to refer and actual referral behavior is, like other important human events, a very complex multiply-determined matter. Research into the factors, contextual or internal to the supervisor, which

influence referral have only fairly recently begun to appear (Googins, 1979; Harley, 1990; Krucher, 1986/1987; Love, 1989/1990; Nord, 1988/1989; Riediger, 1979; Wilcox, 1984/1985; Young, Reichman, & Levy, 1987). Evidence is also accumulating, however, that supervisors commonly are reluctant to use the referral strategy, leading to underserving and possible serious shortfall in EAPs' potential effectiveness in programs which rely strongly upon supervisors for casefinding (Bayer & Gerstein, 1989; Foote & Erfurt, 1989; Riediger, 1979). The discrepancy between organizational support and sponsorship of an EAP and lack of acceptance of the program and low rate of use of the referral policy by the supervisors it is meant to support was called a "policy-practice gap" by Trice and Belasco (1965).

Most in the EAP field believe supervisory referrals to be a necessary and effective component in program operation (Roman, 1982). The casefinding strategy has been repeatedly affirmed in the EAP theoretical literature and termed the "central strategy" (Trice & Roman, 1978). Supervisory referral was recently re-affirmed as part of the "core technology" (Roman & Blum, 1988), and apparently is to become part of the proposed "Program Standards" promulgated by the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) (Yandrick, 1990).

Research in this area is needed even more now as various precepts of EAP design are questioned and debated. Many in the field are uncomfortable with the constructive confrontation strategy. Supervisory referral is but one of the issues which is polarizing the EAP field. The "other" association which represents and coalesces EAP practitioners is the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA). Recent position statements by that group indicate general rejection of numerous elements considered by EAPA essential to program design. Indicating that "the issues are basic," EASNA (1990) listed several key differences in program philosophy which EASNA espouses in contrast to EAPA. Among those is the strategy

of supervisory referrals. "There are many [other] ways to motivate working people to get appropriate assistance without confronting or otherwise using fear for motivation" (p. 2). This approach to assistance "is viewed as a tool of last resort rather than as an essential or central part of EAP" (pp. 2,6). There is an important role ahead for counseling psychologists and other social scientists involved in employee assistance to critically examine the claims, assertions, and assumptions rampant in this largely non-empirical practice field. Each of the purported elements of EAPs must be subjected to the methodologies of social sciences in order to establish its validity, utility, and necessity, notwithstanding its previously unquestioned acceptance and adoption.

This study examines two of the factors which influence supervisors' EAP referral decisions. The first of these is job performance impairment. This factor has generally been found (Harley, 1990) to stimulate referral action, but typically not in a way that meets the "early intervention" goals of program enthusiasts. As noted above, most EAPs now claim to be "job performance-based" and justify intervention efforts on patterns of job impairment. Roman and Trice (1976) asserted that "the persistent and accumulative impact" of poor job performance eventually leads to referral. Beyer and Trice (1984) reported that supervisory action was related to poor work performance, a finding they found "reassuring" (p. 754).

It has also been found, however, that there is typically an inordinate timelag between the onset of job problems and a much-delayed referral (Googins & Kurtz, 1984; Riediger, 1979), that supervisors ignore and cover-up problems which must be dealt with elsewhere in the organization (Foote & Erfurt, 1989), and that some supervisors tolerate rather severe job impairment and still do not refer (Bayer & Gerstein, 1989; Googins & Kurtz, 1984).

The second factor examined here in relation to referral action is the so-called "trigger." Heyman (1976) proposed the "triggering incident" as crucial to understanding workers' entry to treatment. Her introduction of the concept was to demonstrate that even "self-referrals" typically are responding to some external pressure. The concept has been somewhat changed in recent literature, now referring to occurence of a dramatic or "last straw" incident which is the proximate stimulus to a referral agent in urging or coercing an impaired worker into evaluation or treatment (Beyer & Trice, 1978; Googins & Kurtz, 1984). The "trigger incident" concept has been inconsistently applied in the literature. Sometimes it refers to a dramatic appearance of symptoms or flagrant violation of workplace decorum, and other times it connotes supervisory reaction to sustained generally poor job performance. In this study, the aspect of dramatic change in the employee's behavior at work has been emphasized in order to preserve a clearer distinction between critical incidents and the severity and duration of performance impairment. The contrast is essentially one of time perspective, with job performance problems a trend or steady-state condition.

The hypotheses tested in this study address the validity of job performance impairment and occurence of critical incidents as predictors of supervisory referral. An effort is then made to examine the relative impact of the factors on supervisors by examining each factor's contribution to a multivariate prediction model. It is recognized that the model is quite incomplete, and the variables are not heirarchical. A fully developed model of supervisors' relationship with the EAP lies well in the future. For now, concurrent and construct validation of referral predictors and examination of their inter-relationships contributes to the needed empirical base of employee assistance.

Method

The survey method was used to gather information about supervisors' referral handling of an employee. Seven organizations with well-established EAPs provided access to their supervisory personnel, with an understanding that the data collection would be unintrusive and voluntary. This precluded aggressive efforts to pursue nonrespondents and to increase the return rates. The findings here are a further analysis of some of the data from a multivariate study (Harley, 1990) which examined the validity of attitudes toward referral and previously reported factors as predictors of referral.

Participants

The seven organizations contributing to the supervisor sample provided wide variation in a number of attributes possibly affecting the generalizability of findings. Organizations from various economic sectors, with varying numbers of employees and supervisors, from various regions of the country, with internally staffed and contracted external EAPs in roughly equal numbers, having well-established programs with a range of ages and placing varying emphasis on intervention with alcohol and drug abuse participated in the study. All had in common the use of supervisory referrals based on impaired job performance as a sanctioned means of entry to the EAP. All supported use of constructive confrontation and management-initiated EAP referral in the program policy and informational materials and in supervisory training, though the degree to which it was emphasized as the primary means of EAP casefinding varied.

The supervisors returning completed surveys (N = 415) were about three-fourths male, middle-aged, with some college education, and had about 12 years of experience as a supervisor. The number of employees under their supervision varied considerably across settings, from less than 10 to over 30 in

many of the industrial plants. The final return rate for the survey was 46%, acceptable for the study.

Variables

The dependent variable is an index of referral action taken with a specific subordinate of each respondent, one who is potentially, though not certainly, an appropriate EAP client. Each supervisor was asked to recall "the employee who had the most job problems and had been the most difficult to supervise during the past year." Since all sites had, by intent, a job performance-based EAP, that employee, virtually by definition, is one the supervisor could or should attempt to refer to the EAP if he or she were inclined and prepared to do so. The supervisor was asked to indicate the action taken which best described the degree of EAP referral handling of that "job problems" employee. A range of options was given: not to involve the EAP; to casually mention EAP to the employee; consultation with the EAP about the employee; extensive discussion of the job problems and strong encouragement to go to the EAP; active efforts to get the employee to EAP; giving the employee a choice between EAP and disciplinary action; making a "mandatory" supervisory referral. These options were treated as an interval scale with values 1 to 7. If the supervisor indicated more than one action taken, the highest degree of referral effort was recorded.

An item asked the supervisors "how many referrals have you made to the EAP during all the time you have been a supervisor?" The construct of "referral" was left to the supervisor to define for him/herself, so along with faulty memory or limited recall effort, different definitions may have reduced reliability of this survey variable. The five response options were from "none" to "more than five."

Severity of job performance impairment was measured by means of a brief performance rating instrument, the Best/Worst Employee Rating Scale (Beyer & Trice,

1984). This performance appraisal instrument asks raters to make a "social comparison" of the "best" and "worst" employee ever supervised and the specific target employee, the same one who was the potential object of their referral action. The employees were rated on eight job performance factors: Quality and Quantity of Work, Attendance, Dependability, Job Knowledge, Cooperation, Initiative, and Need for Supervision. The Best/Worst Scale was modified slightly in this application, but the essential technique and features were maintained. The rating instrument has demonstrated good reliability, and factor analysis revealed a large single factor which correlates in expected ways with various performance indicators like accidents, absenteeism, and conflicts with co-workers. Each factor received a rating using a Likert-type scale of 1 = excellent to 5 = poor; the eight factor ratings were then summed into a scale, severity of job impairment. Direction of scoring produced higher scores on the variable to indicate poorer job performance (more severe job impairment). In this study, the job performance measure had a .85 estimated reliability (Cronbach's alpha).

In addition to several other questions about the rated "job problems" employee, the supervisor was asked to recall the possible occurence of something "dramatic or outrageous which would bring attention" to the employee. The examples of "coming to work drunk" and "having a crying spell on the job" were given as prompts and guides. The supervisor was asked to further indicate whether "many people heard about it" (a public critical incident) or "Yes, but few people heard about it" (a private critical incident). The critical incident "trigger" was operationalized in this study as a three-condition variable, dummy-coded with two binary variables.

Results

The supervisors' reported past referrals to EAP and their specific referral handling of the subordinate showing the most job problems in the past year are shown in crosstabulation in Table 1. About two-thirds of the respondents indicated they had made one or more EAP referral in the past, though it is not certain what that meant to them. It would be generally observed that supervisory referral is a low base rate activity of supervisors, as the roughly 400 supervisors made about 500 "referrals" from a population of well over 10,000 employees during an average program life of 8+ years. This indicates a referral rate of about one referral per supervisor per six years, or 0.6 supervisory referral per 100 employees per year.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Insert Table 1 about here

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Nearly half (see Table 1) of the respondents did not indicate/disclose their EAP referral handling of the "job problems" subordinate during the past year. When this high proportion of missing data on the crucial dependent variable was noticed during the first stages of data collection, it was feared that the instrument or instructions were faulty. Therefore, over half of the materials distribution was accompanied by additional clarifying instructions which were verbally emphasized by the data collection coordinators at each survey site. The missing data rate continued the same, with about half of respondents declining to reveal their EAP referral handling of the "job problems," difficult to supervise subordinate. This finding, interesting in its own right, can alert future researchers that supervisors consider this information "sensitive." Referral information is probably very reactive to both the organizational context of the research and its methodology.

Preliminary Analyses

As to their referral decisions with the "job problems" employee, about 40% of the supervisors providing that information indicated that they "would not involve the EAP at this time." This is surely an underestimate of nonreferral action, however, for one-third of those not disclosing referral handling of their specific employee (n = 67 in the crosstabulation) indicated never having made a "referral" in the past. With minimal interpretation, about half (perhaps up to three-fourths) of the supervisory sample made no effort to refer the subordinate identified as having had the most job problems during the previous year.

The high level of nonresponse to the dependent variable raises questions about the internal validity of the study, a problem of all surveys, and especially severe when the response rate begins to fall. For the analysis to proceed further, a plausible explanation of the missing dependent variable data needs to be considered: the nondisclosing supervisor's employee may have had little or no job impairment, so the supervisor felt, rightly, that EAP referral was never indicated for that employee. On that basis, nonresponse may have seemed a more appropriate response.

A two-way analysis of variance (Table 2) and planned comparisons (Table 3) were performed on the job performance (job impairment) ratings catagorized by supervisory disclosure of his/her referral decision about that employee and critical incident condition. Performance ratings are not significantly associated with supervisory disclosure of referral handling (F (1, 392) = 2.12, $p > .10$). A significant association between occurence of a critical incident and job impairment is found (F (2, 392) = 4.10, $p < .02$). The argument that many supervisors did not disclose referral handling because their subordinates were not job impaired and therefore not appropriate for referral is shown untenable.

The mean job performance ratings of employees committing a "public" critical incident differed significantly (p's < .05) from those who were not involved in a critical incident, both in the pooled data (27.4 vs. 29.6) and comparing those whose supervisor disclosed referral handling (28.1 vs. 30.5). The other cross-classified groups did not reliably differ in their job impairments. Concluding, the threats to the internal validity of the study due to selection bias resulting from nonresponse of supervisors to the crucial referral handling variable cannot be entirely dismissed. The preliminary analyses indicate, though, that the "job problems" employees of the respondents did not differ from those of the nonrespondents on either severity of job impairment or occurence or type of critical incident.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Tests of Hypotheses

A stepwise multiple regression was performed, with the index of referral action as the criterion, entering the predictor variables and interaction terms incrementally (Table 4). In the first step, severity of job performance demonstrated significant relationship to referral action (F (1, 212) = 8.20, p < .005). Next, occurence of a private critical incident significantly increased the proportion of referral index variance accounted for, doubling it to 7.5% (F (1, 211) = 8.76, p < .003). In the next step, entry of a reported public critical incident tripled the amount of variance accounted for by the model, a significant increase of R^2 to .20 (F (1, 210) = 32.69, p < .001). An interaction effect was tested and found nonsignificant (F (2, 208) = .11, p > .50) as the cross-product terms were entered. Lastly, dummy codes for the survey sites were entered to test for a locations effect. Entry of the location codes

into the model incremented R^2 by .112, but the increase is not reliably greater than 0 (F (24, 184) = 1.25, $p > .20$), so the hypothesis of absent location effect is not rejected.

The results of the stepwise regression indicate that job performance is a factor in the supervisor's decision to refer to the EAP. The employee's involvement in a dramatic incident at work (private or public) is also clearly associated with the supervisor's decision and degree of referral effort, even after the effect of job impairment is partialed out. An interaction between degree of impairment and occurence of a critical incident or type of incident is not evident. Lastly, the supervisors seem to be referring similiarly, as information about their location does not reliably increase the model's ability to account for referral index variance.

The mean level of referral action taken with employees, catagorized by whether they were involved in a critical incident and the type of incident (but not controlling for degree of job impairment) is shown in the next analyses (Table 5). It appears that unless the "job problems" employee is involved in a critical incident, the supervisor is only likely to "casually mention the EAP" (M = 2.4). A critical incident of either relatively private or public type results in significantly greater efforts ("strong encouragement" or "active assistance") to refer the employee (M's 4.1 and 4.6, both > 2.4, $p < .01$). An interesting but statistically nonsignificant trend is also seen--the more "public" the critical incident, the stronger the referral pressure. Future research is needed to determine whether and how publicity about an employee's behavior can affect the supervisor's referral decisions.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Insert Tables 4 and 5 about here
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

A regression model of the variables is seen in Table 6. The job performance ratings on the Best/Worst Rating Scale and the supervisor's report of whether the "job problems" employee was involved in a critical incident, either public or relatively private, accounted for 20% of the observed variance in the index of referral handling ($p < .001$). Next, examination of the squared bivariate and semipartial correlations of the predictors with the referral variable reveals that the critical incident variables ($sR^2 = .177$) accounted for about eight times as much variance as the job performance variable ($sr^2 = .023$). Commission of a "public" incident was, by far, the strongest predictor of referral. Critical incident as a binary (occur: did/not) variable can account for almost as much observed variance as the full model with job impairment included ($r^2 = .176$).

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Insert Table 6 about here

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Discussion

One may look at these findings as another instance of the question "Is the glass half-empty or half-full?" There is some comfort in the findings with the general level of referral activity. Some supervisors are actively assisting their "job problems" employee to needed help. About 10% of the respondents reported a classic "management referral," and another 10% or so reported making a significant effort to connect the employee with their EAP. This demonstrates that supervisors do not reject the referral role and their programs wholesale.

On the other hand, these data support the anecdotal reports and concerns of EAP staff and administrators who are concerned about supervisory referral, the position currently being voiced by EASNA. Many supervisors appear to be reluctant or unwilling to refer (half, perhaps more), and EAP referral clearly is not

attempted on an "early intervention" basis. (Could there be an underlying "typology" of supervisors associated with their intentions or propensity to refer? Does talking about "supervisors" blind us to the fact that they are not all the same?) This finding is consistent with typical program statistics which report supervisory referrals as a small proportion of the caseload whenever the EAP is well publicized to the workforce, has strong labor union support, is very accessible, and has the confidence of its client "consumers." There is no evidence here that supervisory referral is or could be the "central strategy" of casefinding in a program. On the contrary, referral by supervisors appears to be such a low base rate activity that programs would very likely "dry up" but for the periodic pump-priming of relapsing clients.

The findings on the research variables of performance impairment and critical incidents as factors influencing referral support an inference that supervisors do not, in the main, routinely or readily refer subordinates when job problems develop. The most striking finding was the strong association between critical incidents at the worksite and referral effort. The conclusion seems justified that most supervisors do not perceive and use EAPs as intended, to support their role in maintaining productivity of the workforce. The association found between job performance impairment was not very "reassuring," in this study, for it was small in comparison to the effect of critical incidents and to all the other possible factors not part of the prediction model. The "job performance-based" aspect of the "ideal EAP" is little in evidence here.

An impression is suggested by these findings that many supervisors see EAP referral as a crisis management tool, a "last ditch effort" to use with employees when all else fails and the employee has "made a scene" at work which threatens embarrassment or other adverse consequences for the supervisor. Others have

tendered a similar conclusion (e.g., Erfurt & Foote, 1989; Googins & Kurtz, 1984; Riediger, 1979), but that view cannot be easily accepted by those in the field dedicated to promoting supervisory referral as the "central strategy."

At the least, it must be recognized that EAP referral for problem assessment is not a routine, easy matter used early when job performance starts to slide. An approach has been suggested, but not yet tried, whereby the supervisory functions of work appraisal and informal and formal discipline could be more tightly bound to EAP referral (Harley, 1990). For EAPs to achieve a high level of supervisory support and use implies that program involvement must become virtually automatic for all job-impaired employees, with the "risk" of stigmatizing or making "wrong" referrals removed. The parallel processes of labor relations, human resources management, and employee assistance can and should be more clearly linked in the supervisors' minds and actions, and not only for those employees causing a visible disturbance.

"More training" is the usual rallying cry at this point, and it is surely part of the solution. Training for supervisors is expensive and very difficult to conduct, however. It is not at all clear at this time what training content, how much, how often, and with whom such an effort would be effective, anyway. There has only been one major study of supervisory training in the history of EAPs (Belasco & Trice, 1969), and that study found very minimal training effects.

It is not recommended or contemplated that supervisory referrals be eliminated from implementation of assistance programs, certainly not within corporate-sponsored programs. Total reliance on "self referrals" would surely bring a new set of problems, and as Shain and Groeneveld (1980) commented, such a position "would create quite a strain on our assumptions about the motivation of employers to be interested and involved in EAP" (p. 15).

Since relatively little is known about supervisory referrals and because what is known suggests that things often do not go according to "theory," the position of EASNA that it is premature to declare constructive confrontation a mandated "standard" in programs is not unreasonable. It is worth noting that many union-sponsored "peer-" or "member-assistance" programs are considered quite successful. By studying them more closely, perhaps we could learn much about new outreach roles for counselors and programs, about help-seeking attitudes and behaviors, and about ways to de-stigmatize services.

It seems superfluous to end by again pointing out the great need for further research in this and virtually all areas of EAP. In numerous ways, EAPs offer opportunities for challenging and meaningful research, a veritable testbed for motivational theories, epidemiological studies, primary prevention models, studies of stress and treatment outcomes and models of illness and on and on. Gaining access to organizations is not an easy matter, and the methodology will almost certainly be quasi-experimental at best, but opportunities abound. There are not many other fields of interest like EAP where the principal researchers could all sit at a not very large table and talk about what might be "interesting to look at next." The role for counseling psychologists can be very important and the opportunities to do significant research in a developing field are great. We bring to EAPs not only diagnostic and therapeutic skills for service but also an empirical orientation and needed research skills. Our own profession's struggles toward better understanding of therapy processes and outcomes suggests the humbling and rewarding times ahead for those toiling in the fields of employee assistance.

Table 1
Crosstabulation of Reported Past Referrals and Recent Referral Action Taken with Identified "Job Problems" Employee

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
3		1				1		no answer	1.2%
67	47	6	4	5	1	2	2	0	32.3%
33	12	3	3	5	3	7	8	1	17.8%
56	17	8	1	11	9	8	2	2-3	27.0%
22	5	2	4	2	2	2	1	4-5	9.6%
20	8	2	1	8	4	3	4	>5	1.2%
no answer	did not involve EAP	casually mention	consult the EAP	strongly encourage	actively assisted	discipline or EAP	mandatory referral		
48.4%	21.4%	5.3%	3.1%	7.5%	4.6%	5.5%	4.1%		

Reported Past Referrals

Referral Action Taken with Rated Employee

Note Row and column percentages are at margins; N = 415.

Table 2
Analysis of Variance of "Job Problems" Employee Performance by Critical Incident Condition and Supervisory Disclosure of Referral Action Taken

Effect	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Critical incident (A)	286.89	2	143.45	4.10	<.02
Response/Nonresponse (B)	74.10	1	74.10	2.12	>.10
Interactions AxB	36.58	2	18.29	.52	ns
within	13715.72	392	34.99		

Table 3
Comparisons of Performance Ratings of "Job Problems" Employees by Critical Incident Condition and Supervisor's Disclosure of EAP Referral Action Taken

Response/Non-response to Referral Item	Critical Incident None	Private	Public
Responding	28.1[a] (147)	28.4 (29)	30.5[a] (37)
Non-responding	26.6 (125)	28.5 (26)	28.6 (34)
All ratings pooled	27.4[b] (272)	28.5 (55)	29.6[b] (71)

Note. Higher ratings indicate poorer performance on eight summed job factors (1 = excellent . . . 5 = poor); **N** = 398; ( ) = cell size; [ab]cell means differ significantly in planned comparisons, **p** < .05.

Table 4
Stepwise Multiple Prediction of Supervisory Referral Using Job Performance Ratings and Worksite Critical Incidents

Step	Variable entered	Increment to R^2	F (df) of increment	p	R^2
1	Job Performance rating scale	.037	8.20 (1, 212)	.005	.037
2	Worksite Incident (Private)	.038	8.76 (1, 211)	.003	.075
3	Worksite Incident (Public)	.125	32.69 (1, 210)	<.001	.200
4	Interaction terms	.001	0.112 (2, 208)	>.50	.201
5	Location effect	.112	1.25 (24, 184)	>.20	.313

Note. **N** = 214; critical triggering incidents dummy-coded as Private (1,0) or Public (0,1) or None (0,0); locations dummy-coded (24) for the 25 survey sites.

Table 5
Comparison of Means of Referral Action Taken by Critical Incident Condition

	Critical Incident		
	None	Private	Public
Reported level of Referral Action Taken	2.4^{ab} (147)	4.1^{a} (29)	4.6^{b} (37)

Note. **N** = 213; ( ) = cell size; ^{ab}cell means differ significantly in planned comparisons, **p** < .01.

Table 6
Multiple Regression Results for Job Performance and Critical Incidents with EAP Referral Action Taken as the Criterion Variable

a) Analysis of Variance of the Multiple Regression

Source	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p	R^2
Regression	3	192.9	64.3	17.5	<.001	200
Residual	210	770.9	3.7			

b) Semipartial and Bivariate Correlations

Variable	Multivariate tests			Bivariate tests	
	sr^2	t	p	r^2	p
Performance rating	.023	2.23	.03	.037	.004
Incident (private)	.076	4.16	<.001	.038	.004
Incident (public)	.135	5.72	<.001	.114	.002
Incident combined (as binary variable)				.176	.002

Note. Alpha values (**p**) of $\mathbf{R^2}$ and $\mathbf{r^2}$ are one-tailed and two-tailed for $\mathbf{sr^2}$ with **df** >200.

REFERENCES

Bayer, G. A. (1987). An investigation of the construct validity of the Behavioral Index of Troubled Employees (BITE). Dissertation Abstracts International, 48(6), 1841B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8720504).

Bayer, G. A., & Gerstein, L. H. (1988). An adaptation of models of prosocial behavior to supervisor interventions with troubled employees. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 18(1), 23-37.

Bayer, G. A., & Gerstein, L. (1989). Helping troubled employees: Supervisors' decision-making behavior. Research Presentations of the 18th Annual Conference of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (pp. 53-68).

Belasco, J. A., & Trice, H. M. (1969). The assessment of change in training and therapy. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Beyer, J. M., & Trice, H. M. (1984). The best/worst technique for measuring work performance in organizational research. Journal of Organizational Behavior and Statistics, 1(1), 95-115.

Employee Assistance Professionals Association. (1989). McDonnell Douglas Corporation's EAP Produces Hard Data. The Almacan, 19(8), 18-26.

Employee Assistance Society of North America. (1990, Spring). What are the program issues between EASNA and EAPA?. The Source, 5(1). (Available from EASNA, P.O. Box 3909, Oak Park, IL 60303).

Foote, A., & Erfurt, J. C. (1989). Study data on supervisory cover-up. The Almacan, 19,(8), 33-34.

Googins, B. K. (1979). The use and implementation of occupational alcoholism programs by supervisors: An analysis of barriers. Dissertation Abstracts International, 40(4), 2269A-2270A. (Universtiy Microfilms No. 79-22701).

Googins, B., & Kurtz, N. R. (1984). The employee as client: Perceptions of a work-based alcohol treatment program. Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 16(2), 161-168.

Hall, L. G. (1989). Assessing the effects of socio-demographic, social-psychological, socio-cultural, organizational, and community factors on the propensity of employees to utilize employee assistance programs (EAPs). Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(9), 2790A-2270A. (Universtiy Microfilms No. 9005818).

Harley, D. A. (1990). Factors influencing supervisors' referrals to employee assistance programs (Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1990).

Heyman, M. M. (1976). Referral to alcoholism programs in industry: Coercion, confrontation and choice. Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 37(7), 900-907.

Krucher, K. J. (1986). The relationship between supervisors' interpersonal need structure and use of employee assistance programs. Dissertation Abstracts International, 48(2), 342-A. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8711726).

Kurtz, N. R., Googins, B., & Williams, C. M. (1980). Supervisors' views of an occupational alcoholism program: An experiential perspective. Alcohol Health and Research World, 4(3), 44-49.

Lett, P. D. (1988). Treatment referral compliance with employee assistance program clients. Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(3), 1097-B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8910935).

Love, G. A. (1989). Factors which influence supervisory referrals to industry-based employee assistance programs. Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(7), 3200-B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8921127).

Mastrich, J. L., Jr. (1985). Influences on the successful treatment of alcoholics referred through employee assistance programs. Dissertation Abstracts International, 46(9), 3251-B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8524231).

Nord, J. L. (1988). Predictors of supervisors' referrals to an employee assistance program. Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(1), 79-A. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8909182).

Riediger, A. J. (1979). Employee assistance program: The supervisor's perspective. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

Roman, P. M. (1982). Barriers to the use of constructive confrontation with employed alcoholics. Journal of Drug Issues, 12, 369-382.

Roman, P. M. (1983). Employee assistance programs in Australia and the United States: Comparisons of origin, structure, and the role of behavioral science research. Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 19(3), 367-379.

Roman, P. M., & Blum, T. (1988). The core technology of employee assistance programs: A Reaffirmation. The Almacan, 18(8), 17-22.

Roman, P. M., & Trice, H. M. (1976). Alcohol abuse and work organizations. In B. Kissin & H. Begleiter (Eds.), Social aspects of alcoholism (pp. 445-517). New York: Plenum.

Shain, M., & Groeneveld, J. (1980). Employee-assistance programs: Philosophy, theory, and practice. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Sonnenstuhl, W. J., & Trice, H. M. (1990). Strategies for employee assistance programs: The crucial balance. (Key Issues, Number 30). (2nd ed.). Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, Cornell University.

Tomasek, V. M. (1989). A systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of an employee assistance program in improving employee work performance. Dissertation Abstracts International, 50(9), 4262-4263-B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA9004422).

Trice, H. M. (1980). Applied research studies: Job-based alcoholism and employee assistance programs. Alcohol Health and Research World, 4(3), 4-16.

Trice, H. M., & Belasco, J. A. (1965). Identifying and confronting the alcoholic employee: Role of the industrial nurse. American Association of Industrial Nurses Journal, 13, 7-10.

Trice, H. M., & Beyer, J. M. (1982). Social control in worksettings: Using the constructive confrontation strategy with problem-drinking employees. Journal of Drug Issues, 12(1), 21-49.

Trice, H. M., & Beyer, J. M. (1984). Work-related outcomes of the constructive-confrontation strategy in a job-based alcoholism program. Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 45(5), 393-404.

Trice, H. M., & Roman, P. M. (1978). Spirits and demons at work: Alcohol and other drugs on the job (2nd ed.). Ithaca, NY: New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University.

Wilcox, J. E. (1985). Employee assistance programs in the federal government: Hindrances and facilitations to supervisory constructive intervention. Dissertation Abstracts International, 45(7), 2349B. (Universtiy Microfilms No. DA8422782).

Yandrick, R. M. (1990). With the release of two hallmark documents, EAPA is helping to position our young profession for growth and development in the 1990s. EAP Association Exchange, 20(6), 14-19.

Young, D. W., Reichman, W. R., & Levy, M. F. (1987). Differential referral of women and men to employee assistance programs: The role of supervisory attitudes. Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 48(1), 22-28.